



Solicitation Information
May 4, 2016

RFP# 7550582

TITLE: Audit Services – Rhode Island Division of Higher Education Assistance

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Thursday, June 2, 2016 at 2:00 PM (ET)

PRE-BID/ PROPOSAL CONFERENCE: NO

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov no later than Tuesday, May 17, 2016 at 5:00 PM (ET) . Questions should be submitted in a <i>Microsoft Word attachment</i> . Please reference the RFP# and Title on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.
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SURETY REQUIRED: NO

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GAIL WALSH
CHIEF BUYER
Division of Purchases
RI Department of Administration

Vendors must register on line at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov

NOTE TO VENDORS:

Offers received without the entire completed three-page R.I.V.I.P. Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Department of Administration/Division of Purchases, on behalf of the Rhode Island Division of Higher Education Assistance, is soliciting proposals from qualified firms to provide Auditing Services in accordance with the terms of this Request for Proposals (RFP) and the State's General Conditions of Purchase (available at: www.purchasing.ri.gov).

This is a Request for Proposals, not an Invitation for Bid. Responses will be evaluated on the basis of the relative merits of the proposal, in addition to price; there will be no public opening and reading of responses received by the Division of Purchases pursuant to this Request, other than to name those offerors who have submitted proposals.

INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS:

1. Potential respondents are advised to review all sections of this solicitation carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this procurement are solicited. However, proposals which depart from or materially alter the terms, requirements, or scope of work defined by this Request will be rejected as being non-responsive.
3. All costs associated with developing or submitting a proposal in response to this Request, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the respondent. The State assumes no responsibility for these costs.
4. Proposals are considered to be irrevocable for a period of not less than sixty (60) days following the opening date, and may not be withdrawn, except with the express written permission of the State Purchasing Agent.
5. All pricing submitted will be considered to be firm and fixed unless otherwise indicated herein.
6. Proposals misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Office of Purchases at the time of opening for any cause will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.
7. It is intended that an award pursuant to this RFP will be made to a prime vendor who will assume responsibility for all aspects of the work. Joint venture and cooperative proposals will not be considered. Subcontracts are permitted, provided that their use is clearly indicated in the vendor's proposal and the subcontractor(s) to be used is identified in the proposal.

8. All proposals should include the vendor's FEIN or Social Security number as evidenced by a W-9, downloadable from the Division of Purchases' website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
9. The purchase of services under an award made pursuant to this RFP will be contingent on the availability of funds.
10. Bidders are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this Request for Proposal will be considered to be Public Records, as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the Rhode Island General Laws, without exception, and will be released for inspection immediately upon request, once an award has been made.
11. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFP. It is the responsibility of all potential offerors to monitor the website and be familiar with any changes issued as part of an addendum.
12. Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies in all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Opportunity Office at (401) 222-3090 or Raymond.Lambert@doa.ri.gov.
13. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the state until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). *This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).*
14. The respondent should be aware of the State's Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State's goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBE's in all State procurements. For further information, contact the MBE Compliance Officer at (401) 574-8253 or Dorinda.Keene@doa.ri.gov, or visit the website at www.mbe.ri.gov.
15. It is the responsibility of the vendor to ensure that all subcontractors meet all Federal and State laws and regulations including Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements and that the appropriate business agreements are in place.

The Division of Higher Education Assistance (“DHEA” or the “agency”) is inviting proposals for audit services for the two year period beginning with the agency’s fiscal year ending June 30, 2016.

Audits must be performed for DHEA as the reporting entity, which includes:

Proprietary activities:

- Operating Fund – accounts for all transactions relating to the Division’s activities as a State guaranty agency for the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program and other administrative activities of the Agency
- Scholarship and Grant Fund – accounts for the State’s need-based grant program which is funded by revenues from the Agency Reserves and supplement provided from revenue derived from the Tuition Savings Program administered by the RI General Treasurers Office

Fiduciary activities:

- Agency Fund – Federal Student Loan Reserve Fund

Background

The Division of Higher Education Assistance assumed the responsibilities of the former Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority (RIHEAA) effective July 1, 2015 by enactment of the amendments to Chapter 16 of the Rhode Island General Laws.

The Division is part of the Office of Higher Education and reports to the Board of Education.

The activities of the Division will continue to be reported as a discretely presented component unit within the State’s financial statements.

The Rhode Island Higher Education Savings Trust (RIHEST) a/k/a the *College Bound Fund* was previously overseen by RIHEAA; however, those functions have now been transferred to the Office of the General Treasurer and will not be included in the Division’s reporting entity. Accordingly, no activities of the RIHEST or *College Bound Fund* are included within the scope of this invitation for proposals for audit services.

The audited financial statements of the former Rhode Island Higher Education Assistance Authority are available at www.riheaa.org.

The audit requirements and the items to be specified in the proposals are as follows.

AUDIT SPECIFICATIONS

Due Dates for Completion of Audit and Delivery of Reports for Inclusion in State's Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) and Statewide Single Audit Report.

1. The audit shall be completed and final audit reports (inclusive of all audit communications) related to the financial statements must be delivered to the agency, Director of Administration – Office of Accounts and Control, and the Office of the Auditor General by **September 30** of each year (as required by Section 35-6-37 of the General Laws.)

Failure to comply with the statutory submission date may result in termination of a firm's audit engagement.

Compliance with due dates for submission of the final audit report requires anticipation of and allowance for (1) sufficient review time by the Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General of draft audit reports and other audit communications; and (2) sufficient review time and acceptance by the audit committee, board of directors, or individuals constituting those charged with governance for the entity.

Draft reports shall be provided to the Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General not less than 7 days prior to the required final audit completion and submission date.

Draft reports and other communications submitted for review to the Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General shall have undergone review by the firm's internal quality control review process prior to submission.

Submission of audit reports and communications in electronic form is preferred.

2. The additional audit reports relating to federal awards and required by the federal Single Audit Act and OMB Guidance 2 CFR part 200 – (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements) (if required) shall be submitted no later than **November 30** of each year.

Minimum Qualifications of Auditor

The selected audit firm must meet the following minimum requirements. Each audit proposal shall address each of these requirements.

1. The firm selected for the audit shall be a firm of certified public accountants holding a valid license in the State of Rhode Island or from another state having equal professional standards.

2. The senior accountant in charge of the fieldwork shall be a certified public accountant.
3. The audit firm and the individuals responsible for planning, directing, conducting substantial portions of the fieldwork, or reporting on government audits shall meet the continuing educational requirements of *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.
4. The audit firm shall have an appropriate internal quality control system in place and participate in an external quality control review program as required by *Government Auditing Standards*.
5. The audit firm shall provide a copy of their most recent external quality control review report and also submit the results of any subsequent review performed during the term of the contract to DHEA, the Auditor General and the Director of Administration.
6. The audit firm shall have at the time of proposal, and throughout the period of engagement, professional liability insurance coverage of not less than \$1 million.

Process to Evaluate Audit Proposals

An evaluation committee will be formed comprised of individuals knowledgeable about auditing and financial reporting matters to evaluate the audit firms submitting proposals. Proposals will be evaluated using the following scoring weights resulting in a maximum score of 100 points:

	Maximum Points
Overall qualifications and experience of the firm and the specific Engagement personnel to be assigned focusing on experiences with Governmental entities and the specific line of business or services provided by the entity to be audited.	40
Overall audit approach and audit strategy described/outlined in the proposal And firm capacity to perform the engagement within the specified timeframe Prior experience of the firm in meeting timelines should be factored in here)	30
Audit fees – See formula for points awarded for audit fees (*)	30
Maximum evaluation points	100

*Evaluation technique – audit fees

Audit fee score – (lowest bid/bid for firm being evaluated) x 30 points

Example: Assuming 3 bids received were: (firm A) - \$40,000, (firm B) - \$46,000, (firm C) - \$50,000

Firm A (the lowest bidder)	awarded 30 points	$\$40,000/\$40,000 \times 30 \text{ points} = 30$
Firm B	awarded 26 points	$\$40,000/\$46,000 \times 30 \text{ points} = 26$
Firm C	awarded 24 points	$\$40,000/\$50,000 \times 30 \text{ points} = 24$

An evaluation grid will be prepared summarizing the scoring by each member of the evaluation committee and the composite ranking which supports the agency's request for approval of the selected audit firm. If any firm is disqualified and therefore not evaluated, the reason for such action shall be documented.

Audit Contract

1. It is recommended that audit firms not be engaged for a period of more than six consecutive years; however, audit firms can submit proposals and will be considered beyond this period provided those firms specifically include within their proposal, the specific safeguards to ensure auditor independence on the engagement due to the length of auditor involvement (i.e. rotation of audit management or other quality control measures) The engagement of auditors for more than six consecutive years can also be made when deemed appropriate and/or necessary and when approved jointly by the Auditor General and Director of Administration.
2. Audit contracts covering more than one year shall specify an audit fee for each year. The audit fee for the financial statement audit and supplementary schedule of expenditures of federal awards shall be inclusive of all expenses.
3. The contract shall also specify an hourly rate for all audit work and reporting requirements related to major federal programs due to the variable scope of work in applying the risk-based approach outlined in OMB Circular – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements. Once the scope of testing required for major programs is determined, the auditor and agency will negotiate a not-to-exceed fee for the portion of the audit related to major federal programs.

Audit Standards

1. The audit specifications shall require that the audit be conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards established by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the standards for financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards* issued by the Comptroller General of the United States.
2. The single audit for the Division shall be in accordance with the standards contained in the amended (July 1996) Single Audit Act of 1984 and the provisions of revised OMB Circular – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements, must also be followed.

Audit Scope

1. The financial statements to be presented, audited and reported upon by the private auditor shall include the following, which must be addressed in proposals and in the engagement letter between DHEA and the audit firm:

Proprietary Activities: (Operating fund and Scholarship and Grant fund as major funds)

- Statement of Net Position
- Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in net position
- Statement of Cash Flows

Fiduciary Activities - Agency Fund – Federal Student Loan Reserve Fund

- Statement of Fiduciary Net Position

Required Supplementary Information

- Management’s Discussion and Analysis
- Schedule of Division’s Proportionate Share of the Net Pension Liability
- Schedule of the Division’s Contributions

Supplementary financial statements and schedules:

a. Supplementary schedules in the State Required Format:

- Attachment B – Schedule of Net Position
- Attachment C – Schedule of Activities
- Attachment E – Schedule of Changes in Long Term Liabilities

b. A detail schedule of travel and entertainment expenses as supplementary information:

A detailed schedule of travel and entertainment expenses shall be included as supplementary information in the financial statements. All expenditures of \$200 or greater shall be itemized and a total shown for all expenditures less than \$200. Chapter 35-7-14 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island requires the agency to prepare and maintain documentation for all travel and entertainment in sufficient detail to allow for post audit.

c. Supplementary Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards (required regardless of whether there are any major programs). The following defines federal awards for these purposes:

Single Audit Act (July 1996) – Section 7501 – Definitions:

“Federal awards” means Federal financial assistance and Federal cost-reimbursement contracts that non-Federal entities receive directly from Federal awarding agencies or indirectly from pass-through entities.

“Federal financial assistance” means assistance that non-Federal entities receive or administer in the form of grants, loans, loan guarantees, property, cooperative agreements, interest subsidies, insurance, food commodities, direct appropriations, or other assistance, but does not include amounts received as reimbursement for services rendered to individuals in accordance with guidance issued by the Director (Director of the (federal) Office of Management and Budget).

2. Major Federal Programs:

The audit firm shall audit major programs as required by OMB Circular – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements and express an opinion on compliance for each major program.

Major programs shall be determined in accordance with guidance provided in OMB Circular – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements.

The Division’s expenditures of federal awards will be combined with all other expenditures of federal awards for the State reporting entity for the purpose of determining the Type A program threshold. The following procedures should be followed when the entity is a component unit of the State reporting entity and will be included in the State’s Single Audit Report.

Identify Type “A” Programs

Type “A” programs will be determined using the State reporting entity’s total expenditure of federal awards. Accordingly, an estimate of total federal awards expended by the State of Rhode Island for the fiscal year will be provided by the Office of the Auditor General to the agency under audit and its auditors.

Risk Assessment

In accordance with criteria outlined in OMB Circular – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements, perform a risk assessment of Type “A” programs identified above to determine if they can be considered low-risk. Consider all Type “A” programs not qualifying for a low-risk assessment to be major programs and perform required audit procedures as outlined in the OMB Circular.

The auditor should seek approval from the Auditor General’s Office before declaring any Type “A” program to be low risk.

No risk assessment shall be performed for programs which are less than the Type “A” dollar threshold unless specifically requested by the Office of the Auditor General.

Audit Reports

1. Draft copies of all audit report(s) and the management letter shall be submitted to:

- a. Those charged with governance for the agency (Board of Education, Commissioner, etc.
- b. Office of the Auditor General and the Department of Administration – Office of Accounts and Control prior to completion and issuance and in advance of the required due date (September 30) to allow sufficient time for review and comment. **Draft reports shall be provided to the Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General not less than 7 days prior to the required final audit completion and submission date.** Draft Reports and other communications submitted for review to the Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General Shall have undergone review by the firm's internal quality control review process prior to submission.

Final audit reports (inclusive of all audit communications) related to the financial statements must be delivered to the agency, Department of Administration – Office of Accounts and Control, and the Office of the Auditor General by September 30 of each year (as required by Section 35-6-37 of the General Laws).

Compliance with due dates for submission of the final audit report requires anticipation of and allowance for (1) sufficient review time by the Office of Accounts and Control and Office of the Auditor General of draft audit reports and other audit communications; and (2) sufficient review time and acceptance by the audit committee, board of directors, or individuals constituting those charged with governance for the entity. Failure to comply with the statutory submission date may result in termination of a firm's audit engagement.

2. Reports on:

- a. basic financial statements (as specified in the Audit Scope based on an audit performed in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards*.
- b. supplementary financial statements, schedules and information (including the State required format supplementary schedules to be submitted to the Office of Accounts and Control for component units.)
- c. internal control over financial reporting and on compliance based on an audit of financial statements performed in accordance with Government Auditing Standards.
- d. Reports required under trust agreements, loan agreements, etc.

- e. Reports and summaries related to federal financial assistance (as appropriate in the circumstances) as required by OMB – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements.
- f. Such other reports reasonably requested by the agency and/or the Department of Administration – Office of Accounts and Control and/or the Office of the Auditor General or as required by the applicable section of the General Laws.

Note: Auditors should not prepare the Data Collection Form referenced in Circular Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards – Subpart F – Audit Requirements when the audited entity is a component unit of the State for financial reporting purposes. This form will be prepared by the Office of the Auditor General for the State reporting entity.

The Auditors shall provide a minimum of 20 final copies of all reports and will provide an electronic (PDF) copy of the report as well.

All of the foregoing requirements shall be incorporated in the engagement letter between DHEA and the auditor.

Management Letter

1. A management letter shall be submitted upon completion of the audit to the executive director, audit committee and board of directors, with copies to the Director of Administration – Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General.
2. The management letter should include comments, and/or recommendations beyond those included in the reports described above, on such matters as:
 - a. policies, procedures and practices employed by the agency.
 - b. immaterial weaknesses in internal control that are not “significant deficiencies.”
 - c. use of resources to provide a governmental service in a reasonable, judicious, economical, and efficient manner.
 - d. compliance with state laws pertaining to the agency and with rules and regulations established by the agency.

The foregoing requirements shall be reflected in the engagement letter between RIHEAA and the auditor.

SPECIFIC INFORMATION TO BE REQUIRED OF THE PROPOSER

Offeror's technical qualifications and other information – the proposer shall, at a minimum, describe, and/or provide the following:

- a. Experience with governmental audit engagements and entities similar to the entity.
- b. Firm organization and leadership team and professional staff resources,
- c. Engagement staff qualifications and experience,
- d. Understanding of work to be performed, including planned audit procedures, process to gain an understanding of internal control sufficient to plan the audit, estimated hours and other pertinent information, and
- e. Understanding regarding data to be provided and completed by entity that is needed for the audit.
- f. Project management approach and procedures the proposing firm will employ to ensure compliance with final audit completion delivery dates.
- g. Identification of any sub-contractors, co-proposers, or other entity that will be used to provide the professional services sought by the request for proposal.
- h. Audit client references that may be contacted regarding professional services provided previously.
- i. Proof of professional liability insurance coverage in effect in an amount not less than \$1 million.
- j. A listing or description of other professional services provided by the proposer to the State of Rhode Island (primary government) or any other component unit (see Appendix 5 for identification of State component units).

Representations – the following representations shall be provided as part of the proposal:

- k. Written representation that the auditor is independent under the requirements of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and Government Auditing Standards.
- l. Written representation that the auditor of a quasi-public entity meets the continuing educational requirements of *Government Auditing Standards*.

- m. Written representation that the auditor has an appropriate internal quality control system in place and has participated in an external quality control review program as required by Government Auditing Standards. The firm will provide the entity requesting auditing services and the Auditor General with a copy of the firm's most recent external quality control review report and any subsequent reports received during the term of the contract, if awarded.
- n. Written representation that the auditor is familiar with generally accepted accounting principles for state and local government units as prescribed by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board and with the generally accepted auditing standards promulgated by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants; Government Auditing Standards issued by the Comptroller General of the United States; the Single Audit Act of 1984 as amended in July 1996 and the provisions of OMB Circular Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards - Subpart F – Audit Requirements and will conduct the audit and will report in accordance with those standards.
- o. Written representation that any sub-contractors, co-proposers, or any other entity providing professional services under the engagement will be subject to, and will have met, all the same applicable requirements as the proposer.
- p. In accordance with Chapter 27 of Title 17 of the Rhode Island General Laws, the auditor has filed, or will file upon execution of this contract if required, an affidavit with the State Board of Elections concerning reportable political contributions.
- q. A certification that no Rhode Island "Major State decision-maker", or spouse or dependent child of such person as defined in RIGL § 42-6-1 holds either a ten percent or greater equity interest or a five thousand dollar or greater cash interest in the business.

Coordination Between the Auditor of the Agency and the Office of the Auditor General and Department of Administration – Office of Accounts and Control

- The auditor shall invite the attendance of the Auditor General at entrance, exit and other conferences between the private auditor and the agency.
- The auditor shall submit ALL "draft" copies of the audit report(s) and other audit communications not less than 7 days prior to the scheduled delivery date for the final audit report. Draft reports and other communications submitted for review to the Office of Accounts and Control and the Office of the Auditor General shall have undergone review by the firm's internal quality control review process prior to submission.

- The auditor shall promptly notify the Auditor General and the Director of Administration if the auditor becomes aware of fraud, abuse, or illegal acts or indications of such acts affecting the agency.
- The auditor shall promptly notify the Auditor General and the Director of Administration if the auditor encounters any significant accounting and/or auditing problems, or any situations that would delay completion of the audit.
- Audit work papers of the auditors shall be made available upon request of the Director of Administration and/or the Auditor General for their review, at the completion of the agency audit.

Other

1. The audit proposal shall include: proposed terms of payment of the audit firm's fees, a representation that the firm complies with all federal and state anti-discrimination laws and policies, and proposed rates for supplementary or special services not included within the scope of work of the audit. The audit proposal shall include the resumes of the partner and senior manager in charge of the audit. The proposal shall also state the general qualifications of the field audit staff.
2. The audit proposal shall include a brief history of the firm and its experience in government audits and references.
3. The audit proposal must include a schedule of hourly rates for each category of staff member who will provide services during the audit.
5. The audit proposal must include a signed representation that the fees and expenses shall not exceed the amounts stated in the proposal and do not exceed the fees and expenses charged to the firm's preferred clients.
6. The Agency reserves the right to disqualify incomplete proposals.
7. DHEA shall consider all proposals on the basis of their merit in accordance with the criteria specified herein and shall not exclude any person, firm, or other entity, from consideration on the grounds of sex, race, color, or national origin. Likewise, DHEA requires that all firms have established non-discrimination policies, including policies which prohibit discrimination in the selection of subcontractors. The proposal shall represent and warrant in its response to this RFP that it does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national origin, including but not limited to its selection of subcontractors.

8. DHEA and the Board of Education and staff are committed to maintaining the highest standard of ethics in the awarding of contracts. In accordance therewith DHEA requires that the chief operating officer of each firm certify the following:

“Neither the firm nor any officer, employee, agent, representative or affiliate of the firm has given or offered or shall give or offer to any board member, employee, or representative of DHEA or to any family member of the foregoing, or to any business by which any of the foregoing persons are employed, or to any official of the State of Rhode Island who is subject to the State Code of Ethics, any gift, loan, political contribution, reward, or promise of future employment based on any understanding or expectation that the vote, official action, or judgment of the person would be influenced thereby, and, that no officer, employee, agent, representative, or affiliate of the firm shall have any direct or indirect non-incidental contact with any member of the board of directors of DHEA during any period of time prior to DHEA’s award of the engagement, except at a public meeting of the board of directors of DHEA or at a meeting of a subcommittee of the board of directors.”

Any violation of this Section 8 shall result in immediate disqualification of the proposal.

9. DHEA reserves the right to reject all proposals.

Proposal Submission

Questions concerning this solicitation may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at gail.walsh@purchasing.ri.gov no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this solicitation. Please reference **RFP#7550582** on all correspondence. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If technical assistance is required to download, call the Help Desk at (401) 222-3766 or lynda.moore@doit.ri.gov.

Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions to the Division of Purchases. **No other contact with State parties will be permitted.** Interested offerors may submit proposals to provide the services covered by this Request on or before the date and time listed on the cover page of this solicitation. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases will not be considered.

Responses (**an original plus five (5) copies**) should be mailed or hand-delivered in a sealed envelope marked **“RFP #7550582 Audit Services”** to:

RI Dept. of Administration
Division of Purchases, 2nd Floor
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5855

NOTE: Proposals received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Proposals misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Proposals faxed, or emailed, to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

Response Contents

Responses shall include the following:

1. A completed and signed three-page RIVIP generated bidder certification cover sheet downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
2. A completed and signed W-9 downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases website at www.purchasing.ri.gov.
3. **A separate Technical Proposal** describing the qualifications and background of the applicant and experience with and for similar projects, and all information described earlier in this solicitation.
4. **A separate, signed and sealed Cost Proposal** reflecting the hourly rate, or other fee structure, proposed to complete all of the requirements of this project.
5. In addition to the multiple hard copies of proposals required, Respondents are requested to provide their proposal in electronic format (CD-Rom). Microsoft Word / Excel or PDF format is preferable. Only 1 electronic copy is requested and it should be placed in the proposal marked “original.”

Concluding Statements

Notwithstanding the above, the State reserves the right not to award this contract or to award on the basis of cost alone, to accept or reject any or all proposals, and to award in its best interest.

Proposals found to be technically or substantially non-responsive at any point in the evaluation process will be rejected and not considered further.